

Flathead County Road and Bridge Advisory Committee
Advisory Committee Meeting
September 25, 2008 – **7:00 pm**
Solid Waste District Board Room – County Landfill

1. Roll Call

Committee Members Present: Charles Lapp – Chairman, Karl Schrade, David Hilde, Mike Schlegel – Vice Chairman

Committee Members Absent: Dan Siderius

Staff Present: Operations Manager Guy Foy, County Administrative Assistant Mike Pence, Recording Secretary Juanita Nelson

Public Attendees: Paul Abel, Mark Gluth, Gabe Gluth, Paul MacKenzie – Stoltz Lumber

2. Introductory Remarks

Charles - Public Comment was previously discussed to be moved to the end of the meeting. After a brief discussion on moving Public Comment, **Karl Schrade motioned to move to the Public Comment to the end of the meeting, Mike Schlegel seconded. All in favor; motion passed, Public Comment to be moved to 8:45 pm**

3. Comments from the Public (15 Minutes Maximum) – Moved to the end of the meeting.

See Public Comment after agenda item 7. Comments from the Committee Members.

4. Approval of the Board Minutes

David Hilde moves to approve the minutes from the August 21, 2008 meeting, Karl Schrade seconded the motion. All in favor; motion passed, minutes approved.

5. Action Agenda – No Items Requiring Action

6. Director's Report

- a. Discussion of meeting with County Commissioners on 9-18-08
 - Tabled until the committee can receive copies of the minutes

b. August Operations Report

Guy Foy briefly reviewed the August Operations Report to the committee detailing overlays, grading of gravel roads for maintenance, grading for dust oil requests, the rebuild of Holt Stage, and Bridge Projects.

Brief discussion among the committee members, about the costs, total mileage, and the requirements (review of engineer, traffic counts, review of road conditions) to determine what roads were going to be slated for work.

c. Review of Dave Hilde's Questions from 8-21-08 meeting

Discussion was held about the handout listing different major land owners, and how many acres were owned for each.

Dave Hilde would still like to know the mileage of roads through the major land holders in the county.

Discussion was held about Secure Rural School Funding, and the article in the Daily Interlake about County Reserve Fund and the dollar amount listed as \$21 million. Mike Pence stated that overall the county has about 20% in the Reserve Fund, and that the state has placed the cap at 33%.

Charles Lapp asked what the Road Department's Reserve fund was at. Mike Pence stated that the Road Department has an approximate \$1.3 million reserve fund, or about 12%.

Clarification and discussion of various Private/Public County Roads, Forest Service/County Roads and State Secondary Maintenance.

Charles Lapp stated that David Hilde's concern about some major land owners in Flathead County who aren't paying their way, is very valid. David Hilde still feels that if the majority of the roads are supplying to the private sector of the economy then it's fair because the private sector pay some kind of taxes determined by state law.

d. Holt Stage Millings Project –

David Hilde asked for clarification about the dollar amount of materials in the rebuild and millings. He also asked how the costs were broken down in the PubWorks reports.

Guy Foy reviewed the costs of Reclamite, and the percentage of Reclamite compared to Asphalt Oil for mix. Guy also reviewed the construction phases, testing, and what is left to complete the project.

Karl Schrade asked what would the County do different if pavement was on Holt Stage instead. Guy stated the rebuild would be exactly the same to build the road to standards, but there would only be a 4 inch lift of asphalt compacted instead of the 8 inch lift of millings, compacted down.

David Hilde commented again that the County Road Standards need to be revised.

The committee had various questions about the thickness of the lifts, cost comparisons, and how the break down specifically works in concern to cost of rental of Pug Mill, Reclamite, and Engineering costs. Guy stated that there was a comparison done between Holt Stage and the Fairmont Road overlay in July. With the comparison came the conclusion that the millings on Holt Stage project costs were less than the Fairmont Road overlay.

Karl asked with the rebuild if the Road Department thought that was an average cost for the project. Guy's response was no, not with the engineering, and so forth this is a

completely new direction for our projects. We are hoping to go back to previous project reports and compare the rebuilds.

There was a request to have the millings broken out with cost per ton for comparison with cost per ton for asphalt, engineer costs, rental costs, and reclamite costs as their own separate line item in the next report. The next update on the Holt Stage Project will be reviewed at the October 23rd meeting.

David Hilde asked what portion of the budget this project was deducted from. Guy's response was Overlay's, and moved into Gravel Crushing. We are currently making cuts in the Asphalt accounts, and in the long run it will be coming out of the Gravel Accounts.

Mike Pence stated that the county plans to approve the budget on September 30, and that the Road Department's 8.5 FTE's budgeted for in salaries has been transferred to other parts of the budget. If the County does not receive the Rural Secure Schools funding, the department will have to cut \$900,000 from the budget, including cuts to other projects planned for this budget year.

Discussion about budgeting process for fuel, fuel and energy conservation, along with how the department pays for the crushing contracts. It was explained the crushing that was contracted out for this summer, was paid out of the 2007-2008 budget.

Brief discussion about what was happening to the Old Steele Bridge, planned completion date, and construction. Guy briefly talked about being approached by a private individual about purchasing the bridge. It is a state project and the construction firm owns the bridge, not the county.

e. McMannamy Draw Rebuild Letter Response Spreadsheet.

Discussion was held on the MacMannamy Draw rebuild request and the overview of the letter campaign, the community meeting about the possible rebuild, the department's idea of the rebuild and the most cost effective procedure. Having to move the road to the center of the right-of-way, where the right of way lies would make the project non-cost effective and more difficult. Guy requested the engineer to review AASHTO standards and draw up a preliminary report about the right-of-way issues, and building the road to standard with the slope of ditches and construction, along with minimum amount of right-of-way. He stated the report should be returned to the office in the next two weeks. There was review of various discussions between the Road Department, and the land owners, about the project, and making the project as palatable as possible. If the community was agreeable to the engineers plan, then the county would proceed with having the road surveyed, and begin the project with a community meeting, and the availability of funds.

There was discussion about the legal liability issues, who is responsible, and if the county can assign the liability to the individual land owners. Questions about what is the minimum distance that a tree in the right-of-way can be from the road. There was discussion about mailbox encroachments, and how the county is bound by federal regulations.

7. Comments from the Committee Members

Charles Lapp commented about how the City of Kalispell doesn't want to take the roads that the County is attempting to quit claim to the City of Kalispell. Various discussion about Impact Fees, and the legalities of taking over roads that abuts annexed areas of the city limits. Guy stated if the county were to build the roads to City Road Standards, then the City of Kalispell would be happy to take the roads.

Discussion about a proposed road to be built connecting North Hilltop in Columbia Falls, to Meadow Lake Blvd, plans on annexation into City of Columbia Falls, and the road length of North Hilltop. Charles Lapp would like to know how much of North Hilltop we maintain.

Discussion about maintenance turn around points, using private driveways to turn around, and the different issues that are encountered.

Karl would like an update from the Commissioners how their recommendations have impacted the decisions in reference to the budget. Mike Pence stated that the Commissioners are at a MACo meeting this week, but he would like to ask the Commissioners to respond back to the committee in writing, and to plan on that response for the next meeting.

David Hilde would like to have an update on Peccia, the review and revision of the Road Standards, preview of how the Dust Abatement Cost Share Program is going to work.

Karl Schrade inquired as to when we started to charge for grading for dust abatement. Guy clarified that we will not start charging, for the residents who want to apply dust abatement without being part of the cost share program. With the implementation of the cost share program, we would include the cost of grading to the cost of applying dust abatement.

3. Comments from the Public (15 Minutes Maximum) – Moved from the beginning of the meeting. 8:30 pm

Mark Gluth – McMannamy Draw. He stated he will not try to contest the items discussed by Guy about the McMannamy Draw Project, except that he had discussions with Dave Prunty about the excessive right-of-way clearing and the liability issues. It was stated that 85 % of the roads are not cleared to the extent of the right-of-ways, and knows that even the state highway department has obstacles within the right of way. It was also stated to Dave during the conversation that he would be glad to go to the residents himself if the right-of-way standards could be brought down to something more reasonable. He feels in his opinion if the County is willing to work with the residents, the residents would be more than happy to work with the County for right-of-way, or even turn around issues. Numerous people on McManammy got the opinion from the letters sent that if there wasn't complete agreement from all landowners that the project would not continue. A resident of McMannamy Draw found in the M.C.A. that any money spent on air quality control the State DEQ would do a cost share program of 30 % of what ever was spent. He opposes the cost share of Dust Abatement if the County still plans on doing overlays without it being on a cost share program also. He feels there needs to be equity. He stated if it was our road such as a private subdivision, then we would be

responsible for the maintenance, but it's not our road, it's a county road. The people that have pavement in this valley have received it from all the people of the valley.

David Hilde stated that people who live in private subdivisions paid for their roads, and that anyone can drive on them. He stated that the County does not help maintain the private subdivision infrastructures. He also pointed out that the residents on gravel roads have a lower tax base than the residents that live on paved roads, and that he's not so sure that the residents who live on paved roads aren't paying their fair share. He stated that maybe there are some overlays on connector roads, but those roads are part of the Public Transportation System that must be maintained, and the Commissioner's would be terribly at fault if they let those paved roads deteriorate. He feels that basically most of the paved roads are collectors, and what the county has asked the overlay system to do right now is to protect the existing infrastructure.

Paul Abel – Farm Road. He attended the meeting with the Commissioners on 9-18-08 and felt that the comment from Commissioner Brenneman about what can be done that everyone is treated the same, was the most constructive comment from the meeting. He commented about the Letter to the Editor in today's Daily Interlake by a resident on Stonecrest Dr. and feels the resident who authored the letter, is why the department should completely stop the overlay projects because like minded people will never approve of a tax increase. Another point from the meeting with the Commissioners is that Verdell Jackson was practically pleading for the Commissioner's to make the intent so that he could go to the state appropriation committee for funding. It's in his opinion that the Commissioner's will not ask the state for any additional funding, unless the committee writes a brief letter and gives it to Verdell. The letter must be done within the next month or we will lose our chance for the next two years. Paul commented on Verdell's statement about a surplus in the state funding, and it's awfully important that we at least ask for some type of revenue sharing. He would like to request the committee to draft a short letter to give to Mr. Jackson to take to the appropriation committee.

Paul MacKenzie – Stoltz Lumber. He asked about how the cost share program for the dust abatement would work. He stated to do a cost share program is very difficult. He has concerns about the organizational process, and how to administer the program to be the most cost effective, and to have the most benefit for air quality. He would really like the committee to think about the process and how to get the most public benefit from the money spent.

Paul Abel asked if the Bigfork Sewer District could apply for the Dust Abatement Cost Share program. The response was that the County is modeling the program after Gallatin County's program, and that the county doesn't see why commercial operations with property adjacent to a county road would not be able to participate in the program. The policy will need to be drafted, approved by the Commissioners, and then publicized, with a community meeting and comments.

8. Adjournment

David Hilde made the motion to adjourn, Mike Schlegel seconded, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.